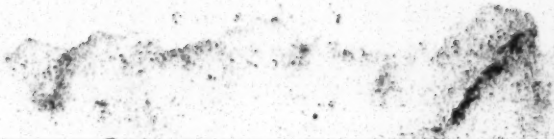
THE HOLY EXERCISE OF A true fast, described out of Gods vvord.



THE HOLY EXERCISE OF A TRVE FAST, described out of Gods vvord.

IT is an euident declaration, of a maruelous blindnes which is in vs, to order our ſteppes towards the kingdom of heauen: that like children new come into the world, we knowe not when to eate and when to forbeare eating, no further then we haue our direction out of Gods worde. But it is yet more marueile, that in ſo ſmall a matter, ſcarſe the hundred perſon, of thoſe which profeſſe the name of Chriſt, know either how to enter into this way, or how to turne thē in it whē they are entred, to any glory of God, or profit of thē ſelues. For to let ȳ Papiſts alone, which through a ſhamefull ſuperſtition in it, rather pine away their ſoules, then take down their bodies: it is a ſhame to ſpeak, how few there are of thoſe which

beare the name of Gospellers, that haue so much as the knowledge of this exercise, so farre are they from any lawful and right practise of it. For a great number as a needeles thinge, reiect it altogether, plunging them selues as deepe in a licétious epicurisme, and belly seruice, as the Papists doe in their childish superstition: of which sort, a great number herein also betray their euil conscience, that shaking of the popish yoke, from their own necks by vsing, or rather, abusing their liberty through a couetous mind of sauing some what, suffer their seruants to remaine still vnder it. Another sort there be, which being afraide of the reproch of belly god & thinking it, fitting to the Christian profession, to keepe the flesh in some bridle allow (in deede) of the exercise of fastin but for wãt of knowledge of a better, th sticke stil in the mire of the popish fast: remedy whereof, there followeth a tr tise, wherby the true fast being vnderst ded, aswel the prophane opinion, of th

which reiect this exercise, as the fooliſh ſuperſtition of thoſe, which content them ſelues with a ſhadow therof, is layd open.

Faſting therefore, is a ſolemne profeſ- »
ſion of our repentance by abſtinence, in- »
ſtituted of the Lord, to the better hũbling »
of our ſelues in prayer: for ſome ſpeciall »
grace at his hand. Wherein, that w̃ is ſayd »
of the Lord cõmaunding it: is to be conſi-
dered againſt thoſe, which would thruſt this exercise, out of the dores of chriſtian churches. For the repreſſing of which error, let that be called to remembrance, w̃ the Lord cõmaundeth by Moiſes: * that e- * Le
uery ſoule once a yere ſhould hũble it ſelf, 29,3
in faſting before the Lord, in a ſolẽne aſ- & 2
ſẽbly. For although y̰ ceremony of y̰ day to 33
be taken away by the cõming of our Sau- Num
our Chriſt: yet the thing it ſelf is no more taken away, then a reſt for Gods ſeruice is baniſhed, becauſe the Iewes Saboth is aboliſhed. For, when as (no doubt) the cõ-ſideration of the faſt was, that the wrath of God, ſhould not breake out againſt thẽ, or being broken out, ſhoulde be cauſed

to returne home againe, the ſame cauſe remaining, there is good reaſon the ſame effect ſhoulde continue. And when it is expreſſely noted, to be an humbling of a man before his God, was there any decree of caſting downe, neceſſary for that people, w̄ is not neceſſary for vs? either ought they to haue gone down lower, into ỹ cõceipt of their vnworthines, thẽ we into ỹ cõſcience of our giltines? whoſe benefits as they are greater then theirs, ſo the abuſe of them ſhould driue vs, to the loweſt humiliation that can be, ſo it be lawful and warrantable by the word of God. But if this holy exerciſe of faſting, doe not clearely enough appeare, to be no fading or ſhadowing ceremony, by this ſet & ordinary faſt, becauſe the like doth not agre with the time of the Goſpel: yet by other moueable and vncertaine faſtes, which were holdẽ vpon occaſion, the ſame may be more ſtrongly ſtrengthned. For where we ſee the like occaſion of faſt, that was then there, we may be aſſured of the ſame commaun-

commaundement to faſt, that was giuen them: cõmaundement I ſay, leſt any man thinking it to be a will worſhip, taken vp at the pleaſure of men, might thinke he had as good (or better) right to lay it down, then they had, to take it vppe. For proofe whereof, that one place of the Prophet Ioel ſhall ſuffice, which vpon occaſion of a great dearth in the land, commaundeth in the Lordes behalfe, to ſanctifie a faſt. *Ioell. 2*

By which one commaundement, it is euident, that other faſtes, which were kept either by the Churches publikely, or by ſome of the faithful priuatly, were done in obedience & not at the random of mans inuention. If this be not ſufficient, to ſubdue our ſundry affections, to this ſo holy an exerciſe, yet at the leſt, let them ſtoupe vnder ſo manifeſt, both doctrine & examples hereof, by the Churches of God vnderneath the goſpel. For when as our Sauiour Chriſt, being charged by the Phariſeis & Iohns Diſciples, that his Diſciples faſted not, ſo aunſwered, that he did not *Luke 5.*

only not condemne it, but highly alſo cō-
mend it, ſo it were done ſeaſonably. It is
plaine, that the liberty which the Goſpell
bringeth: hath not remoued the auncient
bound of a Chriſtian faſt. And if we looke
into the practiſe, wherby the way chalked
out by his doctrine, is troden and beaten
plaine vnto vs by examples, it will ſoone
be ſeene, how greatly they deceaue them-
ſelues: which vnder the coulour of grea-
ter perfection attained vnder the Goſpel
caſt away the aſſiſtance, that the Lord of-
freth by this exerciſe. For if we enquire o
the Churches and Apoſtles faſting, ther
was it moſt often, when they were fulleſt
of the graces of God, that is after the ſo
lemne ſending of the holy Ghoſt.

If we thinke then, that this exerciſe o
faſt, be to ceremonious, becauſe it was ti
ed to a certain day, the cōmaūdement t
hold it without any ſuch reſtraint, vnto
certaine time, ought to correct ẏ though
of ours. If we ſtand in feare, that it ſhoul
be to Iewiſh: the doctrine of the Goſpel
ready to pul vs out of that feare, if preſu

tion of greater graces, thē thoſe ẅ ſhould neede ſuch a ſupply, do bring this faſt out of cōceit with vs: ỹ practiſe of it by the holy Apoſtles, at the higheſt toppe of their perfection in this world, will eaſily ſet vp the credit thereof againe. But if faſts, neither ſtāding nor ſitting, neither vnder the law, nor vnder the Goſpell, neither of the weaker, nor of the ſtrōger, cā draw vs into loue, and (in loue) into practiſe thereof. It muſt needes be cōfeſſed, ỹ there is a maruailous poiſon of rebellio in our natures, ẅ all this trial of the Lords high authoritye, & of ſuch authoriſed examples of the childrē of God, wil not caſt forth. Howbeit, the Lord leaueth vs not here, but vnto his Lordly authority, of cōmaunding this exerciſe of faſt, hath added fatherly promiſes, to allure vs vnto ỹ ſame: as towards ỹ end of this treatiſe, ſhal plainly apeare.

This exerciſe therfore of faſting, being both of ſuch authoritie, and of ſo great waight: to pull wrath vpon vs, if it be neglected, let vs now ſee in what thinges (eſpecially) it doth conſiſt, and they are in

number two. The former is of the out-
im.4.8. ward and (as the Apoſtle calleth it,) of a
bodily exerciſe, the other is of the inward
vertues and helped forward by the bodily
exerciſes. For the outward ceremony, is
an abſtinence for a time, from commodi-
ties and pleaſures of this life, thereby to
make vs the apter to the inward vertue,
as alſo to make ſolemne profeſſion ther-
« of. And this outward abſtinence is there-
« fore commaunded, that we ſhould both
« feele, and in feeling, profeſſe that we are
« vnworthye either of life, or of any things
« that belongeth to the vpholding thereof.
And albeit, it may appeare but a childiſh
thing to carnall men, & a thing vnworthy
the wiſedome of the Goſpell, to place any
thing in this bodily exerciſe, ſeeing that
the Lord is a ſpirite, and will be worſhip-
ped in ſpirite and truth, and ſeeing that
they being of their owne nature, neither
good nor euill, can not make vs either
better or worſe, yet if we conſider that
it is the Lordes ordinance, who hath ſo
com-

maunded it, we can not be but moſt aſſured, that the Lord who hath ſo inſtituted it, wil giue it a bleſſing, and cauſe it to proſper, to that ende of humbling our ſelues, whereunto he hath ordained it: if we vndertake it in his feare, and in a conſcience of obeying the Lords commaundement. Thoſe which came either to runne, or to wraſtle for the beſt game, were wont to abſtaine from ſuch thinges, as might hinder their exerciſe, or make thē leſſe able to performe them with praiſe: and whatſoeuer, either pith in their armes, or ſwiftnes in their legges, they had otherwiſe: yet as they neglected not that abſtinēce, ſo they foūd that it greatly profited them, to the better breathing and other inhaling of them, to their exerciſes. And ſhal we thinke, that the diet which the Lorde him ſelfe hath appointed, to the ſetting of vs towards the ſpiritual wraſtling with our earthlie minde, ſhall not haue a ſinguler fruite? And if there were no other fruite of this abſtinence, but that the enemies

1. Cor. 9

mouth ſhould thus be ſtopped, which
charge the Goſpell, to ſet open a ſchool
to all licentiouſnes of eating, and to giu
(as it were) a ſauce to prouoke mẽs appe
tites thereunto, which are otherwiſe to
ſharpe ſet of them ſelues, it ſhould be n
ſmal effect of our abſtinence. I graunt th
Papiſtes charge vpon vs, is here the ſam
Luke. 5. 33. with the Phariſeis, againſt the diſcipl
of our Sauiour Chriſt, but why ſhoul
not we, if we deſire that the Goſpe
ſhould be well ſpoken of, take away t
occaſion of ſuch ſpeaches. But let vs ſ
wherin this abſtinẽce doth conſiſt, whe
firſt of all commeth to be conſidered, t
abſtinence from meats & drinkes, whe
(as the principal of the outward obſeru
1. Sam. 12. tiõs) the whole exerciſe tooke the nam
Mat. 6. 17. and the worde it ſelfe with the prac
Deut. 10. 6. declare, that it is not onely a ſober vſe
Leuit. 23. meats, which ought to be cõtinuall all
Dan. 2. life long, or a more ſparing diet then a
Iudges. 20. ther times, but an vtter abſtinence fr
Mat. 6. euening to euening, from all kinde

mea

meats and drinks. Whereby it appeareth, that the Popiſh faſt is nothing leſſe, then the faſt which the Scripture teacheth: for they breake the necke of this abſtinency, both by fulnes and by delicacy. By fulnes, in that it is lawful (as other daies) at diner to fill them ſelues with any thing, fleſh only excepted: at euening and morning to fill them ſelues with bread and drinke. By delicacy, for that, where men on that day, ſhould content them ſelues with commō and courſe meates, ſufficient onely for preſeruacion of health: the Papiſtes in their abſtinence, did either not ſo much as ayme at this marke, or els they ſhot groſſely wide. For in permitting the vſe of all things at their dinner, beſides fleſh, it is euident, that they left greater dainties, and greater ſtirrers of fleſhly luſtes, thē they did cut of. And beſides, the dainties in meates, wine, (then which there is nothing more prouoking) was as vſuall that day as of others. And at euening, whē they would giue the cleareſt teſtimony of

their abſtinence, and when they did (as it were) light their candells to ſhew their abſtinence by: ſuch as were both able and might finde in their hartes, to beſtow it of them ſelues, had their tables furniſhed with ſpice breade, with fruites of this ſide and beyonde the ſeas, with marmelet and ſucket and ſuch like: then which dealing, what could be more childiſh? to deny the taſting, only of one morſell of fleſh, and to permit a fulnes of breade: to forbid the courſer meates and table, (which might haue bene furniſhed for two pence,) & to draw in the delicateſt meats, which could not be prouided for twentie ſhilinges: to reſtraine the vſe of things bread at home, & to leaue the vſe free of thinges fetched out of Barbarie: finally to condemne the eating of a peece of ſmoky and reaſty bakon, and to iuſtifie the banqueting and iunqueting diſhes, which are before mentioned. That I ſpeake nothing of ſome of the poorer ſorte, which vpon the thurſday at night & friday at diner, would fill their

ellies the fuller, that they might paſſe
uer their abſtinence, with leſſe fee-
ng the want of their accuſtomed diet.
ll which things, as we condemne in the
apiſtes: ſo we muſte carefullie take
ede that they be not found in vs: vnles
haue forgot that in iudging them we
ndemne our ſelues, when as we doe *Rom.2.1.*
e ſame thinges, which we finde fault
rthy in thé. An other of theſe corporal
ercíſes is watching, or a cutting ſhort
our ordinary ſleepe: which we may ap-
to the furtherance of this exercíſe: for
ide that this abſtinence, is a remouing
ordinary pleaſures and commodities,
ing we are commaunded to watche in
yer, (whereof this is a ſpeciall time,)
ppeareth, that ſome thing alſo ſhould
pared from it. And therefore the Pro-
t Ioel exhorting the Prieſtes to this *Ioel. 1.13.*
exercíſe of faſt, biddeth them that
ſhould continue in ſackcloth in the
t time, extéding this exercíſe (at the
t) to ſome part of the night: Where

notwithstanding it is to be noted, that as well in the former abstinence from meat, as in this withdrawing of some part of sleepe, that nether is so straitly required of the Lorde, but that those whose either disease, or other infirmitie will not bear this abstinence, without hazard of their health, may vse so much libertie, as shall serue for the preseruation of their health: so they take heede they vse not this gentle dealing of the Lord, as a cloke to hide the lustes of their flesh withall. A third kind of abstinence is in the apparell, that albeit they put not on sackcloth & ashes as the holy fathers did in times past, yet

" that they content them selues, with a com-
" mon kinde of attyre, auoyding all su-
" costlines and curiositie, whereby in tri-
" king and trimming vp them selues, the
" flesh may take occasion of being proud.

Thus the Lord, when he would haue the
Exod. 33.5 children of Israell to humble them selues before him, spake to Moises, saing, speake vnto the children of Israell, that for

pre-

preſent time, they lay aſide their iewels & ornaments, that I may know what I ſhall do with them. And thus farre hath it ben ſpoken of thoutward exerciſes, which are generall, & to be done of all, which make this ſolemne profeſſion of repentance. There is one yet which is more ſpeciall, belonging vnto maried perſons alone, which is, that they for the time, ſhould with conſent abſtaine from the mutuall fellowſhippe one of another, which is ſo ſtraitly required, that eue the bridegrom and the bride, (which of al other ought to haue the greateſt priuiledge in that point) are bidden at ſuch times, to come out of their chambers. *1. Cor. 7* *Ioell. 2*

But foraſmuch as, the kingdom of heauen ſtandeth not in theſe thinges, & the Lord being a ſpirite, will be worſhipped in ſpirit & truth: either theſe exerciſes muſt lead vs to ſome farther thing, or elſe the ſame accuſation will lye againſt vs, wherin the Prophet charged the Iſraelites, who contenting them ſelues with the outward *Rom. 1.*

58.3. ceremony of abſtinence, were ſent home as empty as they came. And in deede, vnleſſe we bring more with vs, then this our abſtinency, we may be matched with the beaſtes faſt of Niniuie: for they alſo both
3.7. eate nothing, & were couered with ſackcloth: yea the beaſts faſt, may be ſo much better then ours, as there be ſome kinds of beaſtes, that can longer endure without meate and ſleepe then we. Where the Papiſtes faſt, which was ſhewed before to be childiſh, may here be proued to be beaſtly and brutiſh. For if they did only abſtaine from meate, they iudged themſelues to haue holden a good faſt vnto the Lorde. There follow the inward vertues helped forward by the bodily exerciſe, which are in number two. The one is the humbling and caſting downe of ourſelues, before the highe maieſtie of God with ſorrow for our ſinnes: the other, the aſſurance that we haue, that with forgiuenes of them, we ſhall obtaine ỹ thing that we ſtand in neede of, and make ſuit

fo

for.

Here therefore, first cometh to be con-
sidered, our humbling and casting down,
which is a vile esteeming of our selues,
unswering to the outward exercise. For
herefore doe we abstaine for a time, that »
we might thereby haue a quicker feeling »
f our owne vnworthines. Therefore we »
ring downe the body, that the mind may »
e likewise brought downe. Therefore we »
rucifie the flesh, that the deserued death »
f the spirite, may be the better knowen. »
herefore we abstaine from our plea- *Mark.* 2.
res and commodities, that through cō- *Luke* 5 3
cience of sinne, and feeling of the wrath *Math.* 9.
f God, either present, or to come for the »
me: we might draw our selues to a grea- »
r sorow. In which respect, the exercise
hich the other Euangelistes cal fasting,
. Mathew calleth mourning: hereupon *Ioel* 2. 17.
cometh, that weeping which is a witnes 1. *Sam.* 7.
f our sorowe, is annexed vnto their fast,
hich the children of God haue done so
entifully in this exercise, that they haue

am. 7.6. bin ſaid, to haue drawen whole buckets of water: w̃ the depth of the ſorow for their ſinnes, & the anger of God againſt them hath miniſtred. And as theſe outward exerciſes are commaunded, to drawe vs to a feeling of our vnworthines: ſo in the feeling thereof, by them we make a ſolempne confeſſion of the ſame. For the
" children of God in times paſt, by their
" abſtinencie from meate and drinke, con-
" feſſed them ſelues vnworthie ſo much a
" of a crumme of breade or droppe of wa-
" ter: by putting on ſackecloth, vnworthi
" of the worſt ragge to couer their ſham
" with. So that if common honeſtie, an
" health would haue ſuffered, they woul
" haue ſtripped them ſelues ſtarke nake
" The ſame is to be vnderſtanded, of th
" benefite of ſleepe and of mariage, as a
" ſo, of all other the commodities of th
" life: whereof they did not only confe
" them ſelues vnworthie, but in that th
" put duſt and aſhes vpon their head
" they gaue to vnderſtande, that they we

vnwo

ynworthy of the life it ſelfe, and that they »
deſerued to be as farre vnderneath the »
grounde as they were aboue it: yea if »
there had bene any thing, apter to haue »
ſet forth their euerlaſting condemnation »
in hell, of that alſo woulde they haue »
borne the marke, thereby to declare their »
guilt & deſert of the ſame. So that here- »
by they doe iuſtifie the Lord, in that ven- »
geaunce againſt them: whereof by this »
humbling of them ſelues they ſeeke re- »
dreſſe. If then we keepe a holie faſt vnto the Lorde, we muſt thereby be humbled in our ſelues before the Lorde: but if vpon confidence of our faſting, we waxe bolder to ſinne, in a perſwaſion y through obedience giuen vnto him, in this one poynt, we may be bolder to be diſobedient in others: or if the vſe hereof doe make vs ſwell againſt our brethren, and after the example of the Phariſeis, we deſpiſe them which do not faſt as we do: then is the faſt, appointed of the Lord for our medicine, becom our bane & poyſon.

Luke. 5.
Luke. 18.

And therfore here now, we geue a new charge vpon the Popish fast, a great deal more hot then the former: for that they with the proud Pharisey, boast of the merit of their fastes, setting these fastes as other workes in the place of the bloude of Christ. It is manifest, that their fastes are so farre from humbling them, that through the opinion of them, they rise vp against the Lord, and doe their best to set them selues, euen in the throne of God: so that vnto the childishnes and brutishnes, of their fast aboue mencioned, here they haue added a horrible and blasphemous sacriledge. To the compassing of this true humbling of our sinnes, is annexed necessarily, an information and meditation of the filthines of our sinnes, and of the iust vengeance of the Lorde against them, declared in the threatnings of the law, and execution of the iudgements of God against the wicked, and namely against our Sauiour Christ, who suffered hell paines for them, & specially an infor-

mati

mation & meditation of theſe both ſinnes »
& puniſhments, which the preſent time & »
perſons do giue occaſion of. And thus far »
touching the firſt part of the inward ver-
tues, in faſting, ſtanding in the caſting
downe of our ſelues before the Lord.

There followeth the other part, which is a profeſſion of our faith, that we ſhal be lifted vp as high, through the grace of the Lord our God in Ieſus Chriſt, as the conſcience of our ſinnes doth caſt vs downe, and that we ſhall obtayne, the remouing of the euills tending to our deſtruction, (through the worthines of our Sauiour Chriſt,) which either preſently preſſe vs, or hange ouer our heades, through our own vnworthines. For as true repetance, caſting vs downe with one hand, both in ſorow for our ſinnes, and confeſſion of the ſame, leaueth vs not in our downefall, but through faith, reacheth vs the other hand to lift vs vp againe: ſo this ſolemne profeſſion of our repentance, carying vs firſt to the vallie of trouble, af-

terward bringeth vs backe againe, to the gate of hope. In which reſpect, we alwaies
2.9.5. find in the holy Scriptures, * that faſting is
n.1.4 ioyned with prayer, * which can neuer be
.3 truly made, without hope of obtaining the
20. grace, that is prayed for. But foraſmuch as prayer, is a daily and ordinary exerciſe
5.33. of Gods children, it is manifeſt * by that
7.7. prayer, which is coupled with faſting,
ron. there is vnderſtanded a ſpeciall or peereleſſe kinde of prayer, both in zeale and
.6. ſtrength of prayer, as alſo in continu-
6.23. aunce of the ſame: whereby appeareth,
.3.8. that here is an other vſe of the outward
58.4. abſtinence, that it might be as it were a
" winge, wherewith the prayer, that other-
" wiſe through earthly affections, creepeth
" vpon the ground, might the eaſilier flye
" vp into heauen, and that it might be a
" grindeſtone, to make a point of it, that it
" may pearce, & to ſet an edge that it may
" cut, both the viſible and inuiſible enemies
" which we praye againſt. And therefore
" the outwarde abſtinence that pulleth

downe

downe the bodye, helpeth to lift vppe the „
mind, and crucifying the fleſh, it quicke- „
neth the ſpirite and maketh it more liue- „
ly to this exerciſe. Where yet againe the
popiſh faſt is found inſufficient, which vp-
on the dayes of their faſts, had no extra-
ordinary exerciſes of prayer: more then
other daies which were not faſted. To the
better performance alſo of this part, is an-
nexed an informacion and meditation, „
of the gracious promiſes of God, eſpeci- „
ally ſuch as may ſerue for reliefe of the „
preſent occaſions, whercin the better to „
correct our dulnes and heauines to this
ſo holy an exerciſe, let vs remember, that
in the deſcription of the faſt, it is ſaid, that
it is to obtaine ſome ſpeciall grace at the
hand of the Lord. Whereby it is giuen vs
to vnderſtand, that vpon due holding of
this faſt vnto the Lord, there be excellent
promiſes and a moſte ſingular rewarde:
whereof the place of Ioell, as it ſpake be- *Ioell.* 2. 1
fore, for the commaundement of all the & 19. 20
faſts, which the people of God vſed, ſo wil

it vndertake for the promiſes which the Lorde hath made, to all thoſe which ſubmit them ſelues to the obedience therof. The truth of which promiſes is ſo manifeſt in the Scriptures: as the Sunne(at noone dayes)can not be clearer. For let all the faſts of the holy Churches,and of godly men layd out in Scripture,both of
dges 20 the olde and new Teſtament be* turned ouer, and it ſhall be ſeene,that the ende
*a.*19.6. of their faſt(which kept it in any meaſure
*ſt.*4.16. of truth and ſimplicitie)was a feaſt, and
hron. the iſſue of their mourning great reioy-
3. ſing. For,albeit the ordinarye prayers of
*ni.*9.20. the faithful,returne not empty vnto them
*ah.*2. againe, yet hauing regarde vnto theſe which are ioyned with this exerciſe, they
*es,*12.5 may worthely ſeeme to be barren,which
*es.*13.2 are otherwiſe frutefull,and to be blaſted which otherwiſe ſeeme full eared:yea the
*egum.*21 faſt of the wicked kinge Achab, ioyned with no true repentance, nor ſo much as with any true knnowledge howe to ſerue the Lord,but performed in ſome ſort only

i

in keeping of the outward & bodily ceremonie, went not vnrewarded from the Lord. For euen by the very ſhadow of his exerciſe, the execution of that iudgemét, which was awarded againſt him, touching his vtter raſing from the kingdome of Iſraell: was deferred vntil his ſonnes daies. Nowe, if the comming within the ſhadowe of this exerciſe, doth heale ſome diſeaſes, what will it doe if we come to touch the bodie thereof? and if the leaues of it, haue ſome vertue to preſerue men from the vengeance of God, howe ſoueraigne is the fruites to deliuer vs frō the wrath of to come? And if the ordinarie obedience of the children of God, goeth not emptie & vnrewarded from the preſence of God, this extraordinarie obedience and exerciſe, in the worſhip of God, muſt needes receaue ſpecial, and extraordinarie bleſſings from his hand. When Benhadad the Sirian king, ouercome by Achab king of Iſraell, was out of hope of any ſafety, at the lēgth by the aduice of his

1. Reg 29.

seruauntes, he put him selfe and his com-
.20. pany in sackecloth, with ropes about their
35. necks, thinking by humbling them selues before the king, to obtaine pardon, which came to passe accordingly. If therfore, mẽ without hope of obtainig pardõ, wil hũble thẽ selues, to them, of whom they haue no promise that they shal obtaine any thing: how much more ought we to do it, which haue so sure promises of good successe? & if mercy was obtained of men, in whom there is scãt a drop, of that pity & cõpassiõ which is seasul in the Lord: we may be wel assured, that we shall not misse of it at his hand. And if one enemy, cã looke for it at the hãd of an other, we may with greater assurance, looke for it at the hand of the Lord, to whom we are already recõciled, by the blood of his sonne.

Therefore, if the authority of the Lord should not compell vs, yet the most liberall and certaine promises, shoulde allure vs to this exercise: which if we doe not, what remaineth, but that such as will not

fast,

faſt, with the children of God, muſt eate and drinke of the furious wrath of God, with the wicked: they that will not weepe with the one, muſt howle with the other. And finally, they that wil haue no part, in the obedience of the commaundement giuen hereof, to both the peoples, vnder the law and vnder the Goſpell, muſt haue no part in the promiſes made to any of them, according as the Lord threatneth: that whoſoeuer ſhal not afflict or humble his ſoule with the reſt, that he wil deſtroy them from among his people. The time of faſting is the time of affliction, either for want of ſome great benefit needefull, or through feeling of ſome great iudgement preſent or to come: where the popiſh faſt muſt paſſe another condemnation, which maketh no difference or choiſe of time, but appointeth euery Fryday, and other ſet euens yerely, whether the time be proſperous or vnproſperous, whether it be peace or warre, health or ſickneſs, dearth or plenty, which is all one as if

Leuit. 23. *Luke* „ „ „ „

the Phiſitian ſhould now appoint his patient, this day twenty or forty yeres hēce, to take a purgation, or to be let blood: In which caſe, either he muſt be a Prophet, rather then a Phiſitian, to knowe that he ſhall on that day, haue nede of it: or els he muſt be a Phiſitian of no value, either ignorant or vnfaithfull. As therefore the phiſicion openeth no vaine, but with obſeruacion where the ſigne is, giueth no purgation, without heede taking to the time of the yeare, whether it be ſpring or fall, whether it be hotte or cold: ſo it behoueth the ſpirituall phiſician, to haue an eye vnto the time, when this medicine is in ſeaſon. And ſo much the more, here rather then there, as the daūger is greater. For as a newe peece of cloth added to an old garmēt, taketh ſomthing from the old
5.36. & cauſeth the rent to be worſe, then before: ſo faſting vnfitly applied, to the ſtate of theſe that are enioined to keepe it, maketh them worſe, then they were before
5.37. the faſt. Yea that which more is, as the

newe

newe wine put into old veſſels, doth not onely make them worſe, but breake them all to peeces: ſo this faſt thruſt vpon thoſe, which are not either for the time, or for ſome other cauſe apt for it, doth vtterly deſtroy them. Whereby men may perceaue, what cauſe we haue to make a great conſcience of the Popiſh faſt, as that which is able of it ſelfe (if there were no other corruptions amongeſt them) to driue a man to eternall deſtrruction.

According alſo to the greatnes of the affliction, the time of the faſt is taken, by the diſcretion of thoſe, to whom it belongeth, at the leaſt for a whole day. And if the wrath of the lord be hotter, then two dayes or * elſe three as it apeareth by the example of the Iewes in Heſters time & of S. Paule. And this time (whatſoeuer) hath the nature of a Saboth, for therein men are bound to abſtaine from their bodily labours, according to the ſame ſtraightnes, & with the ſame exceptions, that they are bound to obſerue the Sabaoth.

Leuit. 23 27.28.

* *Eſter* 16.

Actes 9 „ „ *Leuit.* „ 30.31 „ „

l. 2. 12. " And therefore the Prophet willeth the
it. 23. " to ſanctifie a faſt: and the Lord threatne
" that whoſoeuer ſhall doe any worke o
" that day, him will he cut off from among
" his people. The end wherof is, that me
" ſetting them ſelues apart from their da
" ly occupations, might be wholy beſtow
" in the ſpiritual excerciſes aboue ſpecifie
whereby we may knowe, that there wa
neuer a thread, in the olde cloth of th
Popiſh faſt, which was not throughly i
fected w the ſpirituall leproſie, of diſobe
dience vnto the Lord: it is ſo to be note
that where they ordayned many bot
wicked and vnneceſſary holy dayes, th
* one (& beſides the ſaboth the * only ho
day appointed of the Lord) they quite ra
ſed out of their kalender. And of the fa
in generall thus farre.

The kindes or ſortes of faſtes doe fo
low, which are either priuate or publik

The priuate faſt is that, which is vnde
taken vpon ſome particuler calamity, b
the diſcretion of them againſt whom th

calamit

calamitie is sent: and it is ether of a particuler man or houshould. In the forme whereof it is to be obserued, (that forasmuch as the fast is ioyned with a separation from their dayly occupations:) that nether childrē, nor scholers, nor seruaūts, nor any other which beeing at the dispotion and gouernment of others, or hauing some tax or charge laide vpon them, can chose any suche day apointed for common occupations, without the consent of those that haue commaundement ouer them, without which consent, they must be forced to holde their fastes vpon the Lordes day, or other dayes of rest, estabilished in the places of their abode. For here the law of the Lord hath place, that if the wife, sonne, or daughter, vowe a vowe vnto the Lord, that the husband or father shall haue power to breake it. *Numbr* 30.4.

The publike fast is that, which is vndertaken vpon some more generall calamity of the church, at the appointment of the, which (vnder Christ) haue the gouernmēt *Ioel.* 2.

of the places, where the faſt is holden. In this faſt, becauſe a publike aſſembly is cõmaunded, it followeth that the chiefe inſtruction, of the foreſayed profeſſion of repentance, is to be fetched from the publike preaching of the word.

Now leauing the cauſes of the priuate faſtes, to the examination of euerie one, which can beſt iudge of their own eſtate: let vs conſider what cauſes there be, of a generall faſt amongeſt vs. Wherein that it may be ſene, that the trumpet of faſting is blowen rather, by the breath of God thẽ by the mouth of man, let vs take a ſhort vew of the cauſes, of the faſts mẽcioned in the Scripture. The cauſe of the faſt is the wrath of God againſt the church: where is to be conſidered, that the people of God haue not onelie regarded this wrath, againſt them ſelues particularly, but againſt others alſo, of the ſame ſocietie and fellowſhippe in religion that they were of, through a mutual feeling & compaſſion which they haue one with another,

ther, as in the example of the church of Antioch, whose fast appeareth to haue bene taken in hand, rather for the miserie of the church of Ierusalem, then for them selues. Seeing therefore churches round about vs, are fallen into great decay, partly by the spirituall miseries, both of the heresies of Papists, Arrians, Anabaptists, the familie of loue &c. as also the schisme of Lutheranisme daily preuailing: partely by bodily plagues of the pestilẽce, almost in all places, as of the sword in our neighbour countreys, and of the famine which waiteth commonly vpon the same. And when this wrath is considered, either in that which is alreadie come, or in that which may be feared shortly to come, to whether so euer of the causes we looke, we shall finde that we haue cause to fast. Act. 13

For what spirituall euill is in all their churches, which are not altogether in ours: not one of those detestable heresies, but are lodged amongst vs. And although the schisme of Lutheranisme be not a-

monge vs, yet there is almoſt as great diſtraction of mindes for the churche gouernment, beſide the diuerſities of iudgementes in many other matters. And amonge bodily puniſhmentes the plague hath indifferently fed & yet doeth feede vpon vs. The ſword hath ben ſhaken at vs both in the north by traitours, and in the ſouth by diſordered wicked perſons. And ſhoulde it not ſtrike vs that her maieſtie was of late in daũger of her life by a ſhot, which though it were not ment towardes her, ought not to abate our care for her maieſtie, but rather encreaſe it as that which was more nearely directed againſt her of the Lord, to make both her & vs to cry for his gratious couer and protection ouer her. And if we conſider the wrath that hangeth ouer our heades, the noates thereof are taken by thexãple of the people of God: and firſt of Ezra, who vnderſtandinge that the people had marryed ſtraunge women faſted: whereuppon we haue this note of the wrath to come, that

9.3.

considering that sinne is committed opẽly in the land, in diuerse sortes, that therfore anger is at hand. Here may be handled with godly and discrete wisedome the sinnes of the lande.

The second note to know the tempest to come, is taken from the Niniuites fast, whereupon we gather, that for somuch as we are grieuously threatned, aswell by the ministers and seruaunts of the Lord, that speake in his name vnto vs, as also by his late shaking of the earth, that sharp iudgment without repentance must speedily come vpon vs. The thirde is taken from signes of the wrath of God, which may also breake out against vs, as in Hester, where it was concluded at the request of Hamon, of the destruction of the whole Church: as against ours perticularly, by the festred hatred of ỹ late Trident assebly. &c. Another signe, is the preparation made against the Church, or an indeuour to execute their malice, which draue Iosaphat and other moe to a fast. Here the

Ionas.

Hester.

2. Par

lofty countenances, and vndewtifull demeanure of the Papiſtes, may be conſidered, with their rebellious attempts in Ireland, as alſo the Spaniſh nauie, and great preparation made amongſt them of the holy league, with the preſent troubles in Scotland, & ſemblable accidents, ſufficient to procure the practiſe of this holy exerciſe.

* *
*

A GENERALL CONFESSION OF

sinnes, to be made at the exercise of fasting: the more particuler confession, being taken according to the estate of the seuerall Churches, by the good discretion of the Minister, vpon the knowledge hereof.

O, Lord which art glorious in power and holines, we being but dust and ashes, with the casting of our selues downe, at the foote of thy high Maiestie, confesse, that we are most vile sinners, conceaued and borne in sinne, and that we are by nature nothing els, but a lumpe of all wickednes, whose naturall propertie is, to growe in sinne, as we growe in yeares, and to waxe stronge in wickednes, as the powers of our mindes and bodies receiue strength. There is in vs, no holsome nor sounde knowledge how to obey, there is no ma-

nor of good will or affectiō to please thee, finally, there dwelleth no good thinges in our flesh. And although our cursed estate, doth herin greatly appeare, yet our sinne is made out of measure sinnefull, through the exceeding grace which thou offrest by the Gospell of thy deare sonne, whereby we are so farre from profiting, that of our selues we should waxe worse & worse, for the more light of knowledge is shewed, the blinder would we remaine: the greater obedience is taught, the forwarder and stubberner would we become, if thou by the mighty working of thy holy spirite, shouldest not cause it to be fruitefull. And although we haue this naturall corruption in common, with the whole rotten race of Adam: yet we confesse that in vs it hath budded, and shotte forth so much more thē in others, as we haue had moe meanes to kill it, and to cause it to wither, then others haue had. Where first of all, the gracious offer of the treasure of thy holy Gospell vnto vs, maketh vs guilty

many

many wayes, For where paſſing by many other nations, thou haſt truſted our nation withall: yet with a number of vs, hath it found as ſmall entertainment, and felt as great reſiſtance, as amongs them, at whoſe gates it neuer knocked. For a great portion of the land, partly neuer yelding them ſelues to the obedience thereof, and partly falling from it, after they had once yeelded, ſtande proudely, as it were at the ſtaues ende with thee. The reſt which make profeſſion of their ſubmittaunce vnto it, doe it not accordingly: for firſt, there be heapes of our people, which either through an yrckeſomnes of the yron yoke of the popiſh religion, or through a wicked opinion which they nouriſhe, of embracing any religion ſet forth, ſo caſt aſide the former poperie, as they ſtill abyde in an vtter ignoraunce of the truth it ſelfe: in ſuch ſorte, (that through want of preaching) they are as rawe in the knowledge of the true ſeruice of thee, as they were

expert before in the ſeruice of the de-
uill. And where knowledge is, to any ſuch
ſufficiency as is requiſite, for the inhe-
ritours of the kingdome of heauen: there
is it (for a great part) ioyned with ſuch
hypocriſie, as maketh them more dete-
ſtable before thee, (which ſearcheſt the
very raynes,) then if they had ſtill con-
tinued in their ignoraunce. Now, for the
remnant of vs, which through grace haue
truely, and vnfainedly beleued, it is with
ſo great weakenes of faith, and ſo ſmall
reformacion of manners, (that our glori-
ous profeſſion of the Goſpell, ſupported
and borne out with ſo ſmall ſhewe of the
fruites, which the excellencie thereof
doth require) that it maketh I ſay, not on-
ly the enemies to condemne vs, but our
ſelues to ſuſpect one an other, whether
we belong vnto thee or no. Wherein, O
Lorde, we acknowledge that to be our
great and horrible ſinne, that being put
in truſt with this vnſpeakable treaſure of
thy holy Goſpell, and preferred to our
neigh-

neighbours, profeſſours about vs, yet we are in thankeful obedience vnto thee, behind them all: firſt in knowledge, laſt in zeale, before them in the doctrine of thy holy Goſpell, behind them in the diſcipline of the ſame. The yoke of the ſlaucry of our bodies, which the popiſh religion layed vpon vs, we willingly ſhake of: but the holy bands of thy lawe, whereby our riotous life and affections, ſhould be brought into bondage, we doe hardly, and heauily admitte. The Goſpell which brought a freer vſe of our lawful honors, pleaſures and commodities, was welcom vnto vs: But the ſame Goſpell, which reſtraineth thunlawfull licentiouſnes of our ambition, intemperancie and couetouſnes, is not ſo. Finally, ſo much of the Goſpell, as doth more nearely reſpect our ſaluation, we ſeeme to haue ſome care to retayne: but ſo much of it as doth more directly reſpect the glory of God, and the profit one of an other, (thoſe eſpecially which are not of the ſame lande with vs)

we make ſmall accompt of: And ſeeing the naked treaſure of the holy Goſpell, had bene a rich reward of a moſt ſeruiceable ſubiection: it comming vnto vs not alone, but accompanied with ſo longe a peace, with ſo great a welth, ſo plentifull aboundaunce of all thinges, as this lande hath neuer or ſeldome vſed, other landes about vs haue long looked after: maketh our guilte a great deale more, becauſe that in ſo great a largis of the Lordes graces towards vs, we haue bene ſo vngracious towardes him agayne. Here therefore is an other ſtayer, wherby our ſinne clymeth higher, that we, in the commodities of this life, ſurmounting our aunceſtours of the ſame profeſſion of the Goſpell, in king Henry and kinge Edwardes time: are, for the fruites that ſuche a liberalitie aſketh at our handes, a great deale worſe then they: and going beyonde other landes in theſe outwarde bleſſinges, are outrunne of them euen in the very outward

teſti-

teſtimonies and tokens of our obedience towardes him. And beſides this huge heape, and (as it were) reeke, of our generall and common ſinnes, we haue to confeſſe (at the barre of thy iudgement ſeate) the particular ſinnes that we haue locked vp in our ſeuerall eſtates, for our gouernours, O, Lord, for the moſt part, being more mindefull of the fulfillings of their affections, then eyther of thy glorie, or of their good eſtate which are committed vnto them, haue not held ſo ſteady a hande as they ought to haue done, either for the ſtabliſhing of ỹ lawes by which (vnder thee,) they ſhould haue ruled vs, and we by them ſhoulde haue bene gouerned of thee: or for the thorough execution of ſo many, and ſo farre forth as they haue bene well eſtabliſhed. Our Iudges and other Miniſters of iuſtice likewiſe, haue either ignorauntly or corruptly declyned from righteous iudgement: or giuinge ſentence for the truthe, they haue done it, with

no conſcience of thy true feare, or loue of truth, but for reſpect, eyther of vaine glorye, or of perſons. The Miniſters, which ſhoulde haue bene lightes vnto all eſtates, haue for the moſt part, no light in them ſelues, and their eſtate, in whoſe good conſtitution and ſound health, the reſt ſhould haue recouered their health, is of all other the moſt ſicke vnto death. For if the whole number be ſurueyed, ſcarce the hundred will be founde, to be in the lotte of a faythfull miniſterye. For ah alas, howe many are there, which occupying the place of Ambaſſadours, eyther for want of abilitie, or for that they loue eaſe and ſleepe, carye no tollerable ambaſſage at all: howe many which carying the lyght of the Goſpell in their mouthes, cary alſo in their hands, the filthye water of ambicion and couetouſnes to quenche it with: And thoſe which by the grace of God, are for their myght and will in ſome good meaſure iuſtifiable, notwithſtanding, for the moſt

moſte parte, beare it with ſuch infirmi-
ye, through ſlippes, aſwell in a ſounde
and ſubſtanciall manner of touchinge,
as alſo in an euen life aunſwering there-
unto, that if the bleſſing of the Lorde,
were not merueylous vppon their la-
bours, we ſhoulde not neede to feare,
the quenching of this fire of the holye
Goſpell, builded amonge vs, by the e-
nemies, as that which hauing ſo ſmall
attendaunce of blowing, woulde dye
of it ſelfe. Finallie, the people beare
ſo ſmall loue vnto their gouernours of
all ſortes, in loue, ſo ſmall reuerence, in
them bothe ſo litle willing obedience,
that it may be (not vneaſely) ſeene, that
all the partes of the Church and com-
mon wealth, had conſpyred to prouoke
the Lorde agaynſt them. Thoſe our
great and ouergrowen ſinnes, albeit
they are gotten aboue our heades, yet
reſt they not here: for where thou haſt
by thy holye ſeruauntes, the Prophetes,
and Miniſters of thy bleſſed word ſharp-

ly chidden with vs, in a ſeuere denouncing of thy iudgements due vnto them, fearefully threatened vs for them: yet haue we not trembled at thy voice, at which the mountaines doe melt, and the rockes do rent aſunder. A ſtraung thing, that the Lyon ſhould roare, & the weake Lambes ſhould not be afraide, that the Lord of Hoſtes ſhould proclayme warre againſt vs, and we ſhould not goe forth and meete him, for intreatye of peace. Nay, his wrath (as hath bene ſhewed) hath bene and yet is kindled amongeſt vs, and yet as ſenceles men, and as dead fleſh, we are not moued, we are pricked, and we feele it not, we are wounded, and we doe not ſo muche as aſke who hath ſtricken vs. The tempeſt that is comming towarde vs, threatneth our vtter drowning, and yet as a druncken man, we lye ſleeping in the very toppe of the maſte, whereby it is euident agaynſt our ſelues, that vnto the multitude of our ſinnes, we haue added an o-

ther

ther degree of wickednes, which is the continuance in them: vnto our disobedience, we haue ioyned stubbornes, and the biles and botches of our rebellion being ougly in the sight of the Lorde, doe through the putrefaction and festrednes of them, cast out suche stinche, as the earthe which we treade vppon, the waters which we drinke, and the ayre which we breathe, are taynted and poysoned with the infection of them: Yea Lorde, taught by the wonderfull iustice of thy righteous lawe, we charge vppon our heades all the sinnes of our fathers, and grandefathers, to thuttermost of our generations which are past, as those whereunto we are iuster inheritours, then vnto any landes or goodes that they haue left vs. Whereby it falleth out against vs, that our sinnes touche the cloudes, yea, breake into the heauens of his Maiesties owne residence, whose measure being alreadie (as it seemeth) filled, there remaineth nothing,

but that it ſhoulde be turned vppon our heades. Whereuppon we make againſt our ſelues an other cõfeſſion, that we are vnworthie of all the benefites of this life, or of the life to come: both thoſe which we either haue or yet hope to enioy, from the greateſt to the ſmalleſt, frõ the kingdom of heauen, to one onely drop of water. That we are worthy of al the plagues, which either haue heretofore ſeaſed, or ben yet poſſeſſed of vs. Yea if thou ſhouldeſt ranſacke all the hid, and ſecret treaſures of thy fearefull iudgementes, which in thy lawe thou threateneſt againſt the breakers thereof, not onely to the raſing and ſweeping vs, from of the face of the earth, but alſo to the throwing of vs head long into the bottomleſſe pit of hell: yet woulde we therein alſo acknowledge thy righteous iudgemẽts, for vnto vs belongeth ſhame and confuſion of faces, but vnto thee, glory and righetouſnes. All which both guilt of ſinne, and deſert of puniſhment, notwithſtanding (O, father of mercies,

cies,& God of all comfort)we truſting vnto the promiſes, which thou haſt made vs in Ieſus Chriſt,are bold through him, hũbly to call for the performaunce of them. And firſt we humblie deſire thee, to forgeue vs all our ſinnes.Thou haſt ſaid,that if we confeſſe our ſinnes, thou art faithfull to forgeue vs them.We acknowledge the debt;cancell therfore that obligation, let not the multitude of them preuaile againſt vs, but where our ſinne, hath abounded,let thy grace more abound, and as we haue multiplied our ſinnes, ſo we pray thee to multiplie thy mercies, & although we haue by continuance in them, ſo ſoked our ſelues, that thereby we are not onely lightly ſtayned, but alſo haue gotten as it were the ſcarlet and purple dye of them: yet let them all (we pray thee,) being waſhed in the bloud of thy deare ſonne, be made as white as the ſnow in Salmon, and as the wolle of the ſheepe which come from waſhing.And to conclude, as our ſinnes haue magnified

themselues in an infinite length, breadth, depth & height: so let thy mercies (which passe all vnderstanding) of al sides and all assayes out reach them. Therefore also we most humbly desire thee o Lord, that the sinne being pardoned, thy wrath which is alreadie declared, may be appeased towards all the churches of our profession, and especially towards vs, that the manifolde breaches of the churches and common wealthes may be made vp, that those being retained into the bosome of the Churche, which belonge to thy election: the rest of the Papists and hereticks may be vtterly rooted out, and that the enemies in religion, being slaine, we may to the vttermost thinke all one thinge in the honest and peaceable gouernment of the common wealth, vpon which vniting of vs in all truth & honestie, the curses, the plagues and barrennes being remoued, a way may be made to thy blessinges, which as the hills doe the valleys, may make our lande holesomely fruitful.

And

And not only the wrath which is alreadie kindled, maybe quenched, but that which hath bene lately threatned, may be cauſed to retire. For the graunt wherof vnto vs, we beſeech thee to remember, ỹ how vnworthie ſoeuer, yet are we thy people & ỹ ſhepe of thy paſture, who thou haſt redemed with thy moſt precious bloode, watched ouer with a carefull eye, defended with a mighty hand, deſpiſe not therfore O Lord the works of thy hands. And ſeing thou haſt loued vs, when we hated thee, viſited vs when we deſired thee not, then acknowledged vs, when we knewe not thee: nowe that there be a number of vs, which loue thee, deſire thine aboade, and acknowledge thee, hold on thy loue ſtill, depart not from vs, deny vs not, O thou God of trueth, which art the God that chaungeſt not. And if thou wouldeſt or couldeſt forget vs, calling vpon thee, yet what ſhoulde become of thy greate name, which is called vpon by vs: And therefore for thy glorie ſake, and for thy

bleſſed name ſake, which in our deſtruction ſhould be rent and runne through, ſpare vs, ſpare vs good Lorde, according to the vſuall dealing, which thou haſt euer kept with thoſe, which in prayer haue had recourſe vnto thee, and according to the olde and vnchaungeable nature, of a mercifull, kinde, ſparing and long ſuffering God: which mercy we doe not, (O Lord) deſire, to the end that we ſhould tumble and wallowe our ſelues in our accuſtomed neglect, and contempt of thy holy word: but together with mercie for our ſinnes, & the reward of thé, we moſt humbly craue vpon the knees of our heartes: that for the time to come, (how long, or how ſhort ſoeuer) we with denial and deteſtation of our ſelues, and of our wicked luſtes, may offer vp vnto thee in Ieſus Chriſt, our ſelues, our bodies and ſoules to be ſeruauntes at thy holy commaundement in that reaſonable ſeruice, which the high reaſon of thy holy word doth preſcribe: and to be weapons, or inſtru-

ſtruments of righteouſnes, and holynes, as they haue bene heretofore of the contrarie. All which thinges, as what ſoeuer thou knoweſt to be further needefull for vs, or for any of the churches, we pray thee, as our Sauiour hath taught &c.

A CONFESSION OF *ſinnes, with faith and repentance.*

O Mercifull and heauenly father, we thy ſeruaunts doe humbly proſtrate our ſelues before thy Maieſtie, acknowledging here in thy ſight our hainous offences committed againſt thy Maieſtie, ſeeing and beholding thy heauy wrath againſt them: we feele our ſelues laden (O Lord our God) with a huge company of horrible ſinnes, whereof euen the very leaſt, being but conceaued in thought, is ſufficient in iudgement to throw vs down to the euerlaſting burning lake. Our owne conſciences, O Lord, do beare witneſſe againſt vs, of our manifold tranſgreſſions of thy bleſſed lawe, of our ſecuritie and ſenſeleſſe blindeneſſe running headlong to deſtruction, committing ſinne after ſinne, although not notorious to the worlde, yet horrible before thine eye. The thoughtes of our heartes riſe vp in iudge-

iudgement againſt vs: the vanitie of our talke before thy maieſtie condemneth vs: the wickednesse of our deedes from thy ſight reiecteth vs: al our wicked thoughts, wordes and deedes, with the inward corruption of our nature, doe altogether as it were a whole lumpe and loade of ſinne, lye heauie vpon vs, and with their intollerable weight, doe euen preſſe vs downe to hell. We doe dayly grone vnder the burthen of them, inwardly lamenting our owne folly ſo greedily running into them, In heauen, earth, or hel, we ſee none able to ſuſtaine the weight of them, but euen thy deerely beloued ſonne Ieſus Chriſt, who in mercy infinite, & compaſſion endleſſe, hath ſuſtained and ouercome that endleſſe puniſhment due vnto them: in him therefore, in him moſt mercifull Father, & through him we come to thee, being fully aſſured according to thy promiſe that thou wilt accept and take that ful recompēce, which he thy deere ſonne hath made for vs, as a iuſt raūſom for al y ſinne

of al thoſe who with a true faith take hold on him. In him therefore we ſee thine anger towards vs appeaſed, thy wrath ſatisfied, and our debts payd.

Increaſe in vs, (good Lord,) we beſeech thee, this liuely and feeling faith, for we feele it often times in vs very weake, and troubled with many doubtes: increaſe it in vs (O Lord) that we may through thy holy ſpirite be aſſured, that the puniſhment of our ſinnes is fully in thy ſonne diſcharged. Make vs, O Lord our God, to feele this ſame in our ſoules and conſciences, that Ieſus Chriſt is ours, and all that he hath done: that we are grafted into his body, and made one with him, & therefore fellow heires with him of euerlaſting life. Let vs not onely haue theſe wordes in our mouthes (good Lord) but through thy holy ſpirite, let vs feele the comfort of them in our harts fully ſealed & ſetled in vs: that we feeling our ſelues inwardly before thy iudgement ſeate diſcharged, and our conſciences towardes thee

thee appeaſed, may be ſwallowed vp with an vnfained loue towarde thy heauenly Maieſtie, and towardes our brethren for thy ſake. Make ſinne to die in vs daily more and more, that we may hate, deteſt, and vtterly abhorre all ſinne and wickednes in al men, but eſpecially in our ſelues: that we may ſtrongly (through thy holy ſpirite) ſet our ſelues in open warre and defiance againſt all ſinne and wickednes: that we pleaſe not our ſelues in our ſinns, but ſtreightly examining ſinne by the iuſt rule of thy holy lawes, we may vtterly from the bottome of our heartes condemne euen the leaſt ſinne in our ſelues, hauing our whole ioy, comfort and conſolation, vpon thoſe thinges which be agreeable to thy bleſſed will, alwayes being afraid to doe any thing contrary to the ſame: that we may euen from the bottome of our hearts, examine and trye our thoughtes, before thy preſence, that they be vpright and vnfained, not hypocriticall in outward ſhewe onely, and ap-

pearance, but that euen all corners of our hearts being opened and disclosed before thee, we may euen as though it were openly before the face of the whole world bring them in shewe, knowing that a double heart is detestable in thy sight: and that we may walk alwaies as before thine eyes, not onely before the eyes of man, being more carefull to walke circumspectly, in this respect, that we haue thee to be a viewer of our doings, a thousand fold more then the eyes of man: that thus we may walke as becommeth thy children, not onely in outward shewe, but also in sincerity of heart, abhorring euen the least sinne in our selues, striuing, resisting and fighting against sinne, not delighting our selues in sinne, nor nourishing the same in our brest, but earnestly ebracing, and studiously seeking after those things which be pleasant in thine eyes: that neither the feare of man, nor losse of goods, life, landes, possessions or frendes, drawe vs away from thee, to do any least thinge

contrary

contrarie to thy will and pleasure: neither the fauour or frendshippe of man, nor yet the flattering enticements of this world, nor the vaine promotions of the same do moue vs any whit from the true and endlesse ioy, delight and pleasure which we ought to haue in those thinges which be agreeable to thee will, and the constant performance of the same: but that alwaies to the end of our life we may continue in thy pathes, growing and encreasing from faith to faith, frō strēgth to strength till at the length we shall come to thy euerlasting rest.
Amen.

FINIS.

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